

The Medical Society
of London, 3
from ^{THE} *the Author*
BEAUTIES

OF THE
EDINBURGH REVIEW.

ALIAS THE
STINKPOT OF LITERATURE.

BY JOHN RING,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN
LONDON, AND OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETIES OF
LONDON AND PARIS.

“Such are the Edinburgh Reviewers: they relish only the garbage and excrements of literature and science. It has become fashionable, of late, to publish books under the title of *Beauties*. Were the Edinburgh Review to adopt a name according to the same plan, it might be termed *the Stinkpot of Literature*.”

Dr. THOMPSON.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR H. D. SYMONDS, PATERNOSTER ROW; AND
JOHN HATCHARD, PICCADILLY.

1807.

Price 2s. 6d.

S. GOSNELL, Printer, Little Queen Street.

P R E F A C E.

THE plan of the Edinburgh Reviewers, however meritorious, has no claim to novelty; being borrowed from the Malays, Lascars, and other Indian savages, who sally forth in a state of intoxication,

“ And run a-muck, and tilt at all they meet.”

In this attempt to profit by the malice of the age, and to live by scandal, their success, it seems, has exceeded their most sanguine expectations. This may be a compliment to themselves; but it is no compliment to the public.

While such critics are encouraged, learning and genius will naturally be despised; and no talent be esteemed, or fostered by the sunshine of public favour, but a talent for slander and abuse.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30795308>

THE
BEAUTIES,

&c.

THE beauties of the Edinburgh Review are the theme of every tongue; it is however now generally agreed, that its chief beauties are calumny and detraction. Our English Reviewers are at a loss to account for the conduct of their Caledonian brethren; and express their surprise at a publication of this kind, which, instead of bestowing praise where due, makes war on the whole host of authors; and mangles them without mercy, for the sake of amusing the public.

They think the Edinburgh Reviewers would have consulted their own interest, rather by cultivating the favour of literary men, than by offending them; but in this they only betray their ignorance. Literary men are not those, who are most likely to be captivated by the Edinburgh Review. Those who are most likely to be captivated by such a performance are the multitude, who read rather for amusement than instruction; and it is of little consequence to mercenary scribblers, whether they please or displease

the judicious few, provided they please the multitude. As to the Editor of the Edinburgh Review, he congratulates himself on his success, and exclaims with Drunken Barnaby,

“ Suavis odor lucri tenet,
Parum curo unde venit.”

The Earl of Lauderdale, in his “ Observations on the Review of his Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of public Wealth,” in the eighth Number of the Edinburgh Review, informs us, that he should not have thought it necessary to publish them, were he not convinced, “ *that the tone of confidence and self-sufficiency which the Reviewer has assumed, may often impose on the cursory reader ; that his petulant invective will gratify the malicious ; and that his comment, however absurd, might, if allowed to pass without an answer, indicate a triumph in the opinion of both.*”

Mr. Thelwall, whose Memoir has been grossly traduced and misrepresented by the Edinburgh Reviewer, after alluding to the forgeries committed by him in that character, and the money which he thus obtains from the deluded public by false pretences, thinks it probable, that he may have pleaded away the lives of his fellow-beings for the perpetration of a similar crime. He next quotes the following passage from Shakespeare :

“ ———Who steals my purse, steals trash ;
’T was mine—’t is his—and has been slave to thousands ;
But he who filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
But makes me poor indeed.”

He then observes, that this art of enriching themselves by filching from others their good name, which Shakespeare thought impracticable, has now been invented; and not only invented, but reduced to a regular system, by a set of *Advocate-Reviewers*, who have organized and incorporated themselves into a regular partnership, for the purpose of sharing their ill-gotten booty. He also observes, that many unhappy persons, whose lives may have been pleaded away by an *Advocate-Reviewer*, might have had better pleas of mitigation and excuse for their crimes, than he can have.

When Mr. Thelwall advises an *Advocate-Reviewer* to get his bread by honest arts, he may certainly demur: he is not bound to make a faithful transcript of an author's words: that is the business of a copying clerk. He will however, in all probability, learn a little caution from this, and some other hints which he has lately received. Forgeries and other efforts of genius, while they raise some men to the bar or the senate, raise others to a *higher post*.

These wonderful phenomena in the literary world are said to be endowed with the gift of tongues; but, as critics, if they are endowed with the gift of every tongue under heaven, and have not charity, they are nothing worth. The weapons which they borrow from the French and Italians are no atonement for the want of English sincerity and good faith.

“ Arcum Nola dedit, dedit illis alma sagittam
Gallia, quis funem quem meruere dabit.”

Our English Reviewers are rather short-sighted,

when they cannot discover the reason why their northern brethren make war upon the whole tribe of authors, and mangle them for the amusement of the public. They are not so stupid but they know, that authors in general have *more wit than money*; and that the readers of *their Review* have in general *more money than wit*.

In this opinion of the motives by which these Reviewers are influenced in their sarcastic and illiberal remarks on the different publications which come before them, I am confirmed by the testimonies of authors of the first rank in literature and science. Dr. Thompson, of Edinburgh, whose excellent System of Chemistry is depreciated in that Review by a jealous rival, observes, that “the reader will naturally wish to know why such pains were taken to detect faults; while the other parts of the performance were passed over in contemptuous silence. Happening to make this observation to a friend of mine, he favoured me with the following solution. ‘Once,’ says he, ‘I put a similar question to an Edinburgh Reviewer, and received for answer, We wish our book to sell, and know enough of the taste of the public to suit their palate. Ridicule and invective alone are certain to command success. If no faults can be detected in an author, a little misquotation can do no harm. You may alter his meaning, and then abuse him for absurdity. Most of our readers will take us at our word, and inquire no farther’.”

The Rev. Mr. Cockburne, Fellow of St. John's College, and Christian Advocate in the University of

Cambridge, the fortunate candidate for Mr. Buchanan's prize, was honoured with the approbation of the best judges which our English university affords; but the same envious and malignant Reviewers endeavoured to blast his laurels with their northern mildew.

In this attempt, however, they were foiled. The learned and ingenious author has completely vindicated himself from their slander. He observes, that the work which they censured, had been honoured with the approbation of three judges of considerable literary character, appointed by the University of Cambridge to adjudge Mr. Buchanan's prize; and that whatever attacks were made on the author of the work, would probably, in this instance, inflict some wounds on them.

He then observes, "The motto of the Reviewers tells us, 'the judge is blamed when the guilty escape;' and their *constant practice* proves, how little hope of mercy can be entertained by those culprits, who are brought before their tribunal. He begs leave, however, to remark, that the escape of the *guilty* is not the *only* matter, for which a judge may deservedly incur censure."

Mr. Cockburne very ably repels the unjust and malicious attack of the Reviewers. He maintains the accuracy of his statements; and proves, that, instead of his having committed the errors laid to his charge, the Reviewers have committed them all.

He then proceeds as follows: "Since, Gentlemen, this single passage proves at once *my accuracy* and

your misrepresentation, I think all further comment unnecessary.—I am well aware, that *the success of your Review depends on its asperity*. Its editors have evidently discovered, that authors are commonly *jealous of each other*; and *love to read of each others faults*.—They know also, that those persons who *cannot write* are envious of those who *can*; and equally delight in reading of their errors.—Thus, by continually finding fault, all palates are gratified; and numbers are tempted to come to the feast; while the high seasoning of the Edinburgh Review gives an additional zest to every morsel.

“It would be in vain, then, to ask of *you* either candour or mercy. It would be asking you to give up *your daily bread*.—Exaggeration and invective—we not only *pardon*, but *expect*; we almost *require* them: but *the privilege of perverting truth*—is more than *your necessities can demand*; or our ill-nature grant.”

Mr. Cockburne says, he fears the “public are *very little interested in this dispute*.”—The public, however, are *very much interested in this dispute*; whether they know it or not.—Mr. Cockburne justly observes, “the truth is, that professed critics, of all kinds, think it necessary *always to say something*; and *mostly to find fault*.—They *censure at random*; trusting, that the ignorance of their readers and hearers will at least equal their own.

“Despairing of success as authors, they console themselves with the recollection of the old French epigram :

" Damis, auteur froid et malin,
 Se croit critique vif et intègre ;
 Cela ce peut,—de mauvais vin
 On fait souvent très bon vinaigre."

Ill-nature, blended with cold blood,
 Will make a critic, sound and good :
 This useful lesson hence we learn,—
 Bad wine to good sound vinegar will turn.

The Editors of the Review pretend, in their advertisement, that their publication is "*distinguished by an impartiality, which no party-zeal has hitherto called in question.*"—Nothing can be more false ; of which the following passages in Mr. Cockburne's pamphlet afford sufficient proof.

" Mark your *wilful misrepresentation*. I said, not that if Poonah and Berar were under the same prince, the whole Mahratta state *would be* in a single hand ; but, that there would be *danger* of such an event."

" Your second objection is *contemptibly trifling*. You allow that the Peishwa possesses all the real power of the Poonah states, while the Rajah of Sattarah is a non-entity ; yet you say I am wrong in fearing, that the power of the two states should be united ; since the Rajah of Berar has not laid claim to the nominal rajahship of Sattarah, but only to the real authority of the Peishwa !—Trifling as your objection is, it is, however, *as usual*, not founded on fact."

" It does not signify at all, whether this court was first established in one place or the other ; but I have detailed the facts, for the sake of shewing, that in

your eagerness to find fault, you seize even the most trivial circumstances, and are indifferent whether you are right or wrong."

"Throughout the rest of your critique, you seem labouring to find fault; but in a manner so confused, that I am not certain what it is you object to."

Dr. Robert Jackson, the celebrated author of a Treatise on Fevers, is another object of the calumny of these sarcastic Reviewers. In a letter addressed to the Editor of the work, he alludes to his motto, "*Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur*; and thinks it fair to add, "*Judex bis damnatur, si innocens mulctetur*." In plain English, if the judge who acquits the guilty deserves damnation, the judge who condemns the innocent deserves double damnation.

He says, his present pamphlet is called for, by the illiberal manner in which the Reviewer has treated his publication, entitled, "Remarks on the Constitution of the Medical Department of the British Army."—He declares, that if the Review were to be read only by those who read the Remarks, he should not have thought it necessary to take this trouble; but as *garbled statements, rash assertions, and pointed invectives*, may impose on the judgments of those who only examine things superficially, he thought it his duty to publish this reply.

The following letter, which I lately received from an eminent medical man, is an additional proof of the arrogance and presumption of the Edinburgh Reviewers, when they pretend that their impartiality has never been called in question.

“ I send you an extract from the Supplement to a Dissertation on the Prophecies, published in 1806 by the Rev. George Faber, B. D. Vicar of Stockton-on-Tees. He complains of a criticism in the Edinburgh Review, expressed ‘ in terms alike unworthy of a scholar or a gentleman,’ wherein the Editor has found fault with his derivation of a Phœnician word ; against which, however, Mr. Faber has well defended himself, and is supported by the respectable authorities of Mr. Bryant and General Vallancey.

“ ‘ No person,’ says Mr. Faber, ‘ who is acquainted with the ambiguity which attends the derivation of oriental words, when expressed in western characters, would have used the language which this Editor has done ; but *indiscriminate scurrility, not candour, is the characteristic of the Edinburgh Review.*— I consider it a question of very nice discrimination, whether to be abused by the Editor of the Edinburgh Review, and in the same sentence with my two learned friends, Mr. Bryant and General Vallancey, *ought to be accounted an honour, or a dishonour.*’

“ The Editor impudently insinuates, that Mr. Faber had never seen Herodotus ; to which he replies, ‘ This pitiful insinuation, worthy of the quarter whence it originates, will serve only to provoke a smile in the countenance of those, who know that it has been my fate to occupy the situation of a college tutor ten years of my life ; in the course of which period, the very passage which the man charitably supposes I have never seen in the original, has been perused and reperused by me *at least a dozen times !*

Before the person who is generally supposed to be *the conductor* of what HE calls *The Edinburgh Review*, next obtrudes his lucubrations on the public, it would be well if he resolved to write with *more caution*, and *less pertness*’.”

One reason why the learned and reverend author doubts the propriety of the title *Edinburgh Review*, is, that it is only a pretended Review ; another probably is, that the conductor and his hirelings are now resident on this side of the Tweed, enjoying the fruits of their labours, eating their way to the English bar, and laughing at the credulity of John Bull.

Some of them are said to be chosen members for rotten boroughs ; an office for which they are admirably calculated. It is generally believed, however, that even those sinks of corruption did not choose them as their representatives, till they had made them *part with the wages of their iniquity*. Be this as it may, there is no room to doubt, that they will faithfully perform their duty *to themselves* ; and the walls of St. Stephen will shortly resound with—*Wha wants me ?*

The specimens which I have given of the spirit and tendency of the *Edinburgh Review*, are probably sufficient to convince every person of common sense, that its authors are not actuated by just and honourable motives ; but by jealousy, self-interest, and spleen. They seem determined to disparage and depreciate all that is excellent in English literature ; and to raise their own reputation on its ruins. Their publication, indeed, can no longer be considered as

an Edinburgh Review. It is now generally believed, that it is principally manufactured in London; and that John Bull, as usual, is harbouring in his bosom, the serpents who are trying to sting him to death.

In the twentieth volume of the Anti-Jacobin Review, it is observed, that “the Edinburgh Reviewers, instead of endeavouring to recommend their labours by a *faithful analysis*, and a *fair account* of the different works which they undertake to criticise, seem to have set out with the professed design of declaring war against the whole fraternity of authors. It is certain, at least, that *very few* of those whom they have honoured with their notice, have met, from them, with *any thing like justice*, not to mention *candour*.—It is really amusing to observe *the impotent self-sufficiency*, with which these critics pretend to erect themselves into judges, from whose sentence there shall be no *appeal*; and it is certainly singular, that *in exact proportion*, as nearly as may be, *to the merit of an author*, is *their anxiety to vilify and degrade his work*.”—These are the gentlemen, whose *impartiality* has never been called in question.

To prove the justice of the foregoing remark, I need only refer my readers to the torrent of abuse lavished on Dr. Young, late Professor of Natural Philosophy at the Royal Institution, in the Edinburgh Review. The modest and unassuming manner, in which Dr. Young has explained the cause which gave rise to this abuse, in his Reply to the Animadversions of these Reviewers, is as follows:

“ I have, at various times, communicated to the Royal Society, in a very abridged form, the results of my experiments and observations, relating to different branches of natural philosophy : and the Council of the Society, with a view, perhaps, of encouraging patient diligence, has honoured my essays with a place in their Transactions.

“ Several of these essays have been singled out, in an unprecedented manner, from the volumes in which they were printed ; and, in the second and ninth numbers of the Edinburgh Review, been made the subjects, *not of criticism, but of ridicule and invective* ; of an attack, not only on my writings and my literary pursuits, but almost on my moral character.

“ The peculiarity of the style and tendency of this attack, led me at once to suspect, that it must have been suggested by some other motive than the love of truth ; and I have both external and internal evidence for believing, that the articles in question are, either wholly, or in a great measure, the productions of an individual, upon whose mathematical works I had formerly thought it necessary to make some remarks, which, though not favourable, were far from being severe ; and whose optical speculations, partly confuted before, and already forgotten, appeared, to their fond parent, to be in danger of a still more complete rejection, from the establishment of my opinions.

“ As far as my reputation in natural philosophy is concerned, I should consider a libel of this kind as

neither requiring nor deserving an answer; but I cannot help feeling the propriety of endeavouring to defend myself from the more pernicious influence of those imputations, which might tend to lessen the confidence of the public in the professional qualifications of a man, whose abilities have been thus contemptuously and repeatedly depreciated."

After making an apology for his condescending to answer this illiberal attack, Dr. Young observes, that art and malice may be so combined, that when a man writes on subjects not well understood by the generality of readers, his works are liable to misrepresentation; and, in that case, he owes to his friends such explanations as will enable them to discover the injustice of the accusation, and the iniquity of its author.

He very ably vindicates himself from the charge of inconsistency which had been brought against him, and is of opinion, that those who read his paper, *not as a modern Reviewer reads, but with patience and attention*, will not think any apology necessary for his conduct. After this, it is with an ill grace the authors of the Edinburgh Review pretend, that their *impartiality* has never been questioned.

Dr. Young convicts the Reviewer of wilful misrepresentations and falsehoods. He accuses him of not having patience enough to read, or intellect enough to understand, the papers which he is criticising. The Reviewer complains of his *utter want of comprehension* of some of the subjects treated of by Dr. Young. Dr. Young thinks his observations plain enough for

for persons of *ordinary* comprehension, and was not aware that it was necessary to make them more plain for the sake of those who have *less*. He is induced to suppose, from the page which next follows, that the Reviewer is not able to distinguish black from white.

He affirms, that the Reviewer totally misapprehends and misrepresents the whole subject, and ascertains the source from which the torrent of invective against him has originated—the pen of a *jealous rival*.

Having answered every thing *that was intended as an argument* in the review of his work, he observes, that this constitutes, in fact, but a small part of those articles. He says, “ They have *much less the appearance of an impartial discussion of a long-disputed question in natural philosophy, than of the buffoonery of a theatrical entertainment, or of the jests of a pert advocate*, endeavouring to place in a ridiculous light the evidence of his adversary.” Such are the Reviewers, whose *impartiality* has never been questioned !

Dr. Young forbears to notice a number of scurrilities in the review of his second paper, and ascribes them to the same hand, being unwilling to suppose, that this island has produced two persons so void of understanding, and so capable of *wilful misrepresentation*. He maintains, that the Reviewer was conscious of his inability to explain the experiment in question, and too ungenerous to confess it: and that he has afforded him *a triumph as gratifying as any triumph can be, where the enemy is so contemptible*. He accuses him of *a pertinacity of blundering*, and of *the*

grossest ignorance of the principles of those branches of science, which he pretends to INVESTIGATE. He also accuses him of quoting one of his remarks as correctly as that edition of the Bible was printed, in which the word *not* was omitted in the seventh commandment. By such arts, a Reviewer can prove any thing which he pleases.

He accuses him of being *blinded by prejudice, and biassed by malevolence.* He declares, that the fancies of the Edinburgh Reviewers are “*superficial and dogmatical; narrow and confused; selfish and interested; puerile and ostentatious.*” Such are the men to whom the multitude look up, as oracles of science, and arbiters of wit!

“The indignation of the same *violent and arbitrary tribunal,*” says Dr. Young, “has been excited and called forth, by a declaration from a man, whose approbation is so much the more valuable, as it is always bestowed with the most cautious regard to experimental accuracy and logical induction.” Dr. Wollaston has observed, that “the theory of Huygens affords, as has lately been shewn by Dr. Young, *a simple explanation of several phenomena, not yet accounted for by any other hypothesis.*” But Dr. Young observes, the Reviewer was not likely to trouble himself about Huygens. His business is *to censure others, not to inform himself.* It was easier for him *to abuse an hypothesis, than to ascertain whether it is true;* and he has made distinctions between the doctrine of Huygens and that of Dr. Young, which evidently prove that he is not acquainted with either.

The Reviewer is not content with attacking the character of Dr. Young—a character which is proof against such attacks as his—but he has also thought proper to point his invectives against that Institution, in which Dr. Young for some time filled the office of Professor, with so much honour to himself, and so much advantage to the public. In order to give the greater weight to his arguments, he insinuates the existence of this connexion, more than a year after it was dissolved.

This is the Royal Institution of Great Britain; an institution in which, as Dr. Young justly observes, its managers have studied to concentrate all that is elegant in literature, or useful in science. It is therefore no wonder, that an *Edinburgh Reviewer*, whose object it is, as the Anti-Jacobin Reviewers observe, to depreciate whatever tends to elevate or support this country, should look on it with a jealous eye.

The Earl of Lauderdale, in his Reply to the Edinburgh Reviewers, expresses his astonishment at their ignorance with regard to the first principles of political economy, which they pretend to discuss, and at the contradictions with which their work abounds. He thinks, however, that their criticism cannot have any effect on the mind of any man conversant with the science. He thinks his observations may induce the Reviewers to be a little more cautious in future, on account of their own characters, and that of their publication.

His Lordship acknowledges, that formerly, when engaged in the active scenes of political life, he had

known instances of *a contempt of truth*, in certain publications; in consequence of the *spleen* of some persons, and the *venality* of others, and of the personal animosity which such struggles call forth; but he did not expect, on *this* occasion, a style which *sets truth at defiance*. He accuses the Reviewer of dealing in *vague invective*, *without quoting a single passage that justified his remarks*: from which it is probable, that he trusted to the indolence of his readers, and to the positiveness of his own assertions, for the chance of escaping detection. He accuses him of abusing Dr. Adam Smith's publication, while he denies the right to others; as if he wished to enjoy a monopoly of that privilege.

He affirms that the Reviewer, instead of subjecting his work to a *liberal, impartial, and profound* species of criticism, and delivering a fair and candid opinion on the subject, displays a spirit which carries along with it a decided antidote to any poison which he intends to convey. He thinks it impossible to recapitulate all the contradictions and marks of ignorance which appear in the Review, within the bounds of his pamphlet, but proposes to give several examples of that *perfect contempt of all accuracy, with regard to truth*, which, he asserts, *forms a characteristic feature of this Review*.

He says, "To put the Reviewer out of conceit with his opinions, will probably be an arduous task. The *unfeeling ease* with which he overlooks *the one half of an argument*, or *misrepresents the whole*, and the presumptuous flippancy with which he states as evident,

propositions that no man, who was not ignorant of the first principles of political economy, could maintain, gives the author of the inquiry reason to suspect, *that he is dealing with a person incapable of fairly arguing a scientific question ; on whose mind even conviction of his error will produce only an inclination to recur to misrepresentation, and augment his abuse. From such a man, he can have but little hopes of extorting a confession of his error.*" This is one of those immaculate Reviewers, whose impartiality has never been questioned !

The Reviewer talks of examining the work under consideration by the assistance of some particular theory ; but, his Lordship observes, he recurs to his usual style of unjustifiable petulance and misrepresentation. " This is the only system to which he resorts for assistance ; and to this he trusts, as usual, as to his main resource."

He once more accuses the Reviewer of a want of a regard for truth, of groundless assertions, of misrepresentations, of affording repeated instances, within the space of a few lines, *that he forgets what he himself has written ; and of exhibiting such a rhapsody of contradictions as not to admit of any serious consideration.* He thinks it impossible that the Reviewer, " blinded as he is by self-conceit," should imagine the student of political economy can derive any aid from the rules which he lays down.

His Lordship, in common with the rest of the world, accuses the Reviewer of a *disposition to censure, rather than to praise ;* and, in spite of his pre-

tended impartiality, “seeming to be fretful when he is compelled to agree with him; for his spleen and misrepresentation are never more prominent, than when this is the case.”

After some observations from another author, his Lordship adds, “These plain and intelligent statements may probably fail of convincing our Reviewer of the inaccuracy of his assertion; as his confirmed habit of perverting all that he peruses, may have rendered his mind incapable of receiving a just impression from what he reads.” This is one of the gentlemen whose impartiality has never been questioned! He advances the novel and strange paradox, *that all labour is equally productive*: he ought, however, to have excepted the labour of wading through his nonsense.

The Noble Lord suspects the Reviewer of being actuated by another motive, besides the desire of censuring him, by a “*wish to recommend himself to those, whom he might think it prudent to flatter.*” As the subject in question was *the sinking fund*, the persons here alluded to were those who at that time held the reins of Government, and had the distribution of the loaves and fishes. It is indeed natural to suppose, that no man could write in such an illiberal way, but one who was a candidate for the wages of prostitution.

In taking leave of this *fair, impartial, and intelligent* critic, who indulges his usual spirit of invective, when treating of the style of Lord Lauderdale’s work, in a manner that shews rather an inclination than a power of doing mischief, his Lordship points out several specimens of inaccuracy and inconsistency,

selected from the Review. He then concludes as follows: "Other examples might be added; but the above appear sufficient to decide the public opinion, and certainly more than sufficient to furnish employment for the Reviewer, if he should be inclined to elucidate them *for the benefit of the student of political economy*. The author of the Inquiry has only now to add, that having explained to the Reviewer *the perfect contempt which he entertains for his opinions*, and assigned to the public *the reasons on which that contempt is grounded*, he feels himself absolved from noticing any future efforts of his malignity."

A small tract has lately been published, entitled, *Hints to certain Reviewers*. It is an anonymous work, although it would do credit to any author. The writer appears to be actuated by the most honourable motives, and to form a just idea of the duty of a critic. The authors of the Edinburgh Review would therefore do well to read his remarks with attention. His mottos are, "Nothing but thunder, *Shakespeare's Measure for Measure*; and, There is which speaketh like the piercings of a sword; but the tongue of the wise is health. *Proverbs*." It has already been proved, that the tongue of an Edinburgh Reviewer is not the tongue of the wise. It is not the tongue of health, but *a running sore*.

The Edinburgh Reviewers are evidently the persons to whom these hints are addressed. Those gentlemen, we are informed by this anonymous author, affect to be surprised at the reluctance of the different writers, whose works they have treated with so much

severity, to submit to their decisions. This reminds him of an anecdote related by Dr. Johnson. He tells us, "He once observed a fishmonger skinning a live eel, and swearing at it because it would not lie still under the operation."

Our anonymous author is so unreasonable as to recommend the *Edinburgh* Reviewers for once to observe, with proper attention, the proceedings of our *English* courts of justice, and to take example from the gentle unimpassioned demeanour of *the judges* who preside in them. He tells them, "These illustrious magistrates, although they never suffer themselves to be led away by a pusillanimous misapplied compassion, yet always look on those who are before their judgment-seat with that tender interest, which men of generous minds can scarcely fail to feel for such of their fellow-creatures, whose fate is in a considerable degree within their power. They are not only not anxious to discover guilt, but, on the contrary, have always a lively pleasure in descrying innocence. If they can shew mercy, they seize the opportunity, as the sweetest solace to a necessarily painful office. If they must chastise, they endeavour, as nearly as the fallibility of human laws will permit, to proportion the punishment to the offence; and whenever they are at length constrained to pass the last dreadful sentence of condemnation, they would think it horrible to embitter it by any expressions which could bear a resemblance of an insult. In short, though they forget not that they are the responsible servants of the public, yet they always recollect, as the most glorious distinction

of their office, that a BRITISH JUDGE is the counsel for the prisoner."

This is all very plausible: but what have the Edinburgh Reviewers to do with such outlandish maxims as these? What impression can such advice make on the hearts of men, who, as this author observes, can so far forget themselves as to tell *a woman* that they will draw blood from her at every stroke, and *leave her in a state of martyrdom more piteous than that of St. Uba?*

Were not the age of chivalry over, as this ingenious author observes, "*a thousand pens would have leapt from their inkstands,*" to revenge the insult.

When such threats are thrown out against *a woman*, who ventures to appear on the stage of literature, we cannot be surprised at seeing the following motto prefixed to a Letter addressed to the Earl of Lauderdale by the Edinburgh Reviewers:

"What ails my Lord?

I thought your patience had been better tried.

Is this your love? ungrateful and unkind!

This my reward, for having cur'd the blind?"

On this occasion, the anonymous author expostulates with the public, and thinks they ought to bear an ample share of the blame of those malignant criticisms, for aiding and abetting them; for seeming pleased with them, and being so eager to assist at such periodical immolations. He contrasts with such conduct the respect with which the Greeks and Romans used to treat their men of letters; and ob-

serves, that it was the generous boast of France, in her most aristocratical days, that even a mediocrity of literary talents was sufficient to raise the humblest of her peasants to an equal and familiar intercourse with the proudest of her nobility; whereas we, who not unjustly deem ourselves the successful rivals of those nations in arts as well as in arms, have at length tamely suffered it to be an established rule, that any *attempt* to write a book is attended with such dishonour as to degrade the author.

Here, in Britain, he remarks, instead of exalting himself in the scale of society, a man rather disgraces himself; insomuch, that even when one of our nobility undertakes the task, he forfeits all pretensions not only to that distinguished deference which is usually observed towards them, but even to that common civility which gentlemen invariably shew to the meanest person who conducts himself with decency. We encourage our critics to treat our authors as sick tyrants in the Arabian Nights treated their physicians. We decree, that those who fail in any point shall be slaughtered without mercy; but we forget, like them, to decree, that he who succeeds shall be placed at our right hand, and advanced to the highest honour.

I agree with this author, that not all, nor even a majority of our Reviewers, deserve to be implicated in the charge of inordinate severity; and that whatever may be their faults, it is not common, that Britons of any denomination are deficient in humanity. I agree with him in thinking, that a large portion of the

people of this country, and even of those who have some partiality and taste for books, have recourse to Reviewers for the sake of saving the expense of money and time, and of abridging their labour. They fondly hope to find in these periodical publications, a succinct account of their contents and merits; and a selection of the most interesting passages which they contain; and thus to avoid the necessity of purchasing the works themselves. Hence, as this author observes, Reviewers, however insignificant in point of learning, are exalted into formidable judges; and probably possess more arbitrary power over the lives and happiness of their fellow-subjects, than any other individuals in a well-regulated community. But, he adds, unless the sun of British literature is set, we have still those among us, who are able to check their insolence, and set bounds to their ambition.

Having given a few specimens of this tract, I now proceed to that of Mr. Thelwall on the same subject; which also may not improperly be called *Hints to certain Reviewers*. They are, indeed, broad hints; but, as far as we can judge, from the length or contents of the publication, it cannot be considered as “A Word to the Wise.” It is entitled, “*A Letter to Francis Jefferay, Esq.*” the reputed Editor of the work, “*on certain Calumnies and Misrepresentations in the Edinburgh Review; the Conduct of certain Individuals on the Night of Mr. Thelwall’s Probationary Lecture, at Bernard’s Rooms, Edinburgh; and the Ignorance of the New Critical Junto, of the simplest Elements of English Composition, and English Grammar.*”

In an advertisement prefixed to this letter, Mr. Thelwall observes, that “ literary journals have not always been very *candid*, or very *impartial*. They are the productions of men, *who have their prejudices*; and of proprietors, *who have their interests*; yet they have hitherto been conducted with *some regard to decency and decorum*.—They have also been conducted with some degree of *secrecy*; which, though it shelters the uncandid from responsibility, is infinitely preferable to the ostentatious profligacy that flames forth in the Edinburgh Review.

“ In this new undertaking, all former precedent has been magnanimously despised. It is certainly an *experiment* as daring, and an *innovation* as intemperate, as ever disturbed the republic of letters.—A set of opinionated, inexperienced, and headstrong young men, form themselves into a self-constituted tribunal of taste and literature. They vaunt of their association in the most public way. Their names are announced, among the literary varieties, in the Monthly Magazine: and although, among those names, *not one appeared, which had yet been distinguished in the ranks of science or literature*,—they proclaim their intention of sitting in judgment upon those works *exclusively*, which have either obtained, or deserved, *a more than ordinary portion of celebrity*.

“ It will easily be perceived, they say in their advertisement, that it forms no part of their object, to take notice of every production which issues from the press; and that they wish *their journal* to be distinguished rather for the *selection*, than for the number

of its articles.—The real object, however, of this selection was soon conspicuous ; for detraction and calumny were inscribed in almost every leaf.

“ What they wanted in genius, in taste, and in knowledge of composition, and of the elements of the English language, these bold adventurers determined to supply, by the presumption of dogmatism, and the virulence of abuse.—Works of genius were subjected to their criticism, for the evident purposes of sarcastic insult, and biographical calumny ; and where articles did not present themselves, that could furnish sufficient food for their malevolence, excursive flights and desultory digressions were indulged.—Criticism *ran a' muck*, as it were, among the talents and productions of the age ; and scarcely a name, that is dear to modern literature, escaped without a stab.”—*These are the gentlemen, whose impartiality has never been questioned !*

Mr. Thelwall accuses them of deviating from their profession of being more select than other reviewers ; and criticising a work, which was printed under great disadvantages, in an obscure neighbourhood, from a malicious motive. He accuses them of indecency of language, inaccuracy of statement, infidelity of quotation, and perseverance in hostility.

In a letter previously addressed to Mr. Jefferay, Mr. Thelwall had accused him of *mean and contemptible calumnies, misrepresentations, and falsehoods*.—In another letter he had asked him, whether there are to be no limits to the *impudent calumnies, indecent scurrilities, and audacious falsehoods and misrepresentations of Reviewers* ; or to the indecorous confederacies of

young Advocates, associated to *destroy* whomsoever such Reviewers might think proper to *proscribe*. He says, they stepped out of their way for the sake of injuring him. He says, they interlarded the *pretended review* of his work with *the grossest misrepresentations, the most demonstrable falsehoods*; and even with *pretended quotations* of passages not to be found in his book. He calls Mr. Jefferay an instrument of *calumny, malignity, and injustice*.

He declares, that the souls of the Edinburgh Reviewers are *bartered to the fiend of malignant misrepresentation*; that their consciences are *suffocated in the bitumen of critical virulence*; that they are become so hardened against all compunction of generous sympathy and humane feeling, as to exult over the last agonies that can rend the afflicted heart; and to extract the bitter venom of slander from the groans and cries of paternal anguish.

He asks, how criminals like these shall receive the chastisement they merit; and where the victim of their calumny shall seek for consolation and redress; and concludes, that as they have abused the public with *falsehoods and forgeries*, they ought to be called before the bar of the public.

He calls these Reviewers *culprits*; accuses them of *propagating defamation, assisting in malignity*, and pretending to prove *facts*, on the authority of his book, for which there is not, in that book, *the shadow of foundation*.—He declares, that were he to quote all the *falsehoods, prevarications, misrepresentations, foistings, and forgeries*, which this curious piece of criti-

cism on his work exhibits, he should transcribe the whole article; and that it is a mere tissue of these *tropes and ornaments of rhetoric*, from beginning to end.—*These are the Reviewers, whose impartiality has never been questioned.*

He thinks, that under their management, *lying is no longer a vulgar art*; but seems to be reduced to a complete science.—He thinks they have received a pecuniary recompense; but *not their desert.*

The article in the Review is not the only cause of Mr. Thelwall's complaint. He was interrupted, and insulted, in his lectures on Elocution, at Edinburgh, by the same individuals. This was not on account of any difference in politics; for Mr. Thelwall declares he has abjured politics, and cautiously avoided introducing any political opinion into his lectures. Hence he had been treated with respect during the time that he had been giving these lectures, which was then between two and three years. While he was on *English ground*, and addressing an *English audience*, his lecture-room was "*sacred from indignity.*"

It may appear surprising, that he could offend literary men, by descanting on a question of science and accomplishment; but all surprise must cease, when the reader is informed of the particular cause of that offence; and recollects the character of the Edinburgh Review.

When speaking of the *criticisms*, which were to accompany his readings and recitals, he observed, that it was not his intention to make this part of his lectures *a vehicle for captious malignity*; or to enter-

tain them with *calumnies*. On the contrary, he declared, that the nature of his undertaking led him rather to the selection of beauties ; and that *one liberal and genuine criticism* was far more useful to the progress of literature, than whole volumes of that *snarling, cavilling abuse*, to which *modern criticism* was too often confined.

Mr. Thelwall fills whole pages with specimens of the nonsense of the Edinburgh Reviewers, a task in which I have no inclination to follow him. He then asks, whether such authors are to be the arbiters of taste in Edinburgh ; whether these are the men, whose fiat is to determine what sciences shall spread, what refinements shall be cultivated, and what amusements shall prevail.—“ Is this,” says he, “ the country of *Mansfield* and of *Erskine* ! of *Hume*, of *Home*, and of *Blair* !—Is this ‘ *the Northern Capital of British Intellect* !’—the renowned seat of science and liberal inquiry, which my imagination painted ?

“ Be it so !—It is not the first time, that my enthusiasm has represented mankind much better than I found them, and perhaps it may not be the last ; for it is necessary to some natures to think well of their fellow-beings, though such thoughts are too often the forerunners of disappointment. It is, I confess, a habit to which, in spite of frequent and mortifying experience, I have always a propensity to recur ; and even with respect to you, Mr. Jefferay, I shall still be glad to hear any explanation, or any circumstance, that may give me reason to form a better opinion,

than that which, at present, I am compelled to entertain."

Dr. Robert Jackson is another author, who complains of the illiberal manner in which his publication has been treated by the Edinburgh Reviewers; and proves the falsity and impudence of their assertion, *that their impartiality has never been questioned*. He accuses them of *garbled statements, rash assertions, and pointed invectives*, calculated to impose on the public. The Reviewer tells us, he has neither derived much pleasure nor instruction from the pamphlet written by Dr. Jackson, in defence of his conduct. This, as Dr. Jackson observes, may be owing to different causes. Either he may be prejudiced against the author; or may have but little to learn.—It may however proceed from a third cause: he may be incapable of learning.

Dr. Jackson, however, decides this point, by convicting the Reviewer of a total ignorance of the subject on which he presumes to write, that of the management of military hospitals; and affirms, that he either perverts the meaning of his publication, for the sake of deluding the unthinking multitude; or speaks like a child, or a fool, for want of knowing better. He declares, that it is unpleasant to be under the necessity of pointing out all the ignorance which the Reviewer betrays on this occasion; but he brings against him a heavier charge, that of concealing, or perverting the truth, for the sake of making a false impression on the mind of the public.

The following extract of a letter from his Royal Highness the Commander in Chief, communicated through the Secretary at War, shews how little reason the Reviewer has for traducing the character of Dr. Jackson; and persecuting him with such unrelenting rancour as he has done.—“ His Royal Highness conceives the unanimous opinion of the Board to have exculpated Dr. Jackson from all improper practice in the treatment of diseases, and the care of the sick; and is gratified in seeing, that an opportunity has thus been given to that most zealous officer, of proving his fitness for the important situation in which he is placed.”

Dr. Jackson afterwards accuses the Reviewer of “ such a propensity to pervert the truth, that he cannot permit himself to transcribe a fact, as it stands in the text.”—He brands him as grossly ignorant, not only of hospital economy, but of physiology and pathology; and as one who has no claim to eminence, in any thing but low scurrility and vulgar abuse. He declares, “ that a man who, like the Reviewer, suspects imposition in others, without a show of evidence, *must be an impostor in his own nature.*”—This is a gentleman, whose impartiality has never been called in question.

Dr. Jackson accuses the Reviewer not only of ignorance, but also of arrogance and presumption. He declares, that he deals in assertions which he has not brought proofs to justify; and in reprehensions, which he has not adduced facts or reasons to support. He declares, that the performance of the Reviewer

stands in such a degree of inferiority, in point of science, that it would not have been entitled to any kind of notice from him, had it not appeared in a work, to which *the public* have attached some merit.

He affirms, however, that while the Reviewer is contemptible in science, he is eminent in rudeness; and marked by a propensity to misquote and pervert a plain meaning, for the sake of imposing a false opinion on the public.—“It is evident,” says Dr. Jackson, “on what ground he stands. He is not a Reviewer, but a reviler in malice.”—He says, he wishes Dr. Jackson’s book had *never been written*: he has *reason* to wish it had *never been reviewed*.

Dr. Thompson, whom I have already mentioned, in allusion to the impudent attack of his excellent System of Chemistry, in the Edinburgh Review, by a jealous and self-interested competitor, adopts the following motto from Gay :

Impertinence at first is borne
With heedless slight, or smiles of scorn;
Teas’d into wrath, what patience bears
The noisy fool who perseveres ?

Dr. Thompson’s evidence is the more important in this case, on account of his having been at first solicited, by the Proprietor of the Edinburgh Review, to furnish occasional contributions. To this request he readily assented; but had not then leisure for the task. A few numbers, however, of the work were sufficient to develope the plan of its authors, and to betray their views; which induced Dr. Thompson to

decline all connexion with them. When he heard that they meditated an attack on his publication, he was of opinion that their *known want of candour* would prevent it from doing much injury to the character of the work, especially as the first edition had met with so favourable a reception.

When their critique appeared, it abounded with personal abuse, with inconsistencies, and frivolous remarks, delivered with a consequential air, and a degree of confidence calculated to impose on the vulgar. Hence Dr. Thompson concludes, that it was *not the result of unbiassed judgment*, but of *personal pique*. One inconsistency is so very glaring, that it cannot be passed over. It shews, that the Reviewer is as much at variance with himself as with Dr. Thompson. He first declares, that Dr. Thompson is *neither so humble nor so obscure as to stand in need of his recommendation*; then declares, in the very same page, that, notwithstanding the freedom of his remarks, he doubts if any of Dr. Thompson's readers entertain a higher sense than he does of the value of his publication; and then, in the same page, *very earnestly recommends the perusal of it to every student of chemistry*.

Dr. Thompson is of opinion, that the Editor of the Review, who is fond of sarcasm, gave this critique a few finishing touches with his masterly hand; that by *leaving out half-sentences*, and *pruning away others till they answered his purpose*, he has *totally altered the original meaning*, and succeeded in giving the para-

graph some point, *at the trifling sacrifice of truth and candour.*

Dr. Thompson having expressed an opinion, that heat and light are unconfined, the Reviewer affirms, that *heat* may be confined in a *vessel of ice*, and *light* in a *dark lantern*. These are important discoveries; for, as Dr. Thompson observes, some people having predicted that the Edinburgh Review will not be a long liver, the worthy proprietor and his friends have hit on an excellent substitute. When the public lose their relish for that abuse, which they now swallow with so much avidity, *ice-baskets of heat* and *dark-lanterns of light* will be valuable commodities, especially on the other side of the Tweed.

As the *ice-baskets* and *dark-lanterns* will receive no addition of weight, though crammed full of *heat* and *light*, Dr. Thompson observes, that any quantity of them may be transported, by any animal whatever, without the smallest inconvenience. He therefore recommends *asses*, as proper for that occasion. He says, “It has been remarked *of late*, that those animals *thrive very well in Scotland*. They are *sufficiently long winded*; and naturalists *have just ascertained*, that they are *animals of taste*; that *their voices are very musical*; and that they have a *great relish for Italian poetry*.”

Speaking afterwards of these Caledonian asses, Dr. Thompson says, “I shall only take the liberty of requesting them, at parting, not to indulge *too freely* in those *unjustifiable arts of criticism*, which so *unhappily distinguish the Edinburgh Review*. Any man can

abuse and call names, any man can misquote, and pervert the meaning of an author; but to discriminate between faults and perfections, and to point out the various degrees of merit with justice, belongs only to a superior mind. If they must indulge in severity, let them not lose sight of candour. Had the review of my work possessed that character, though I might have been displeased at the severity of their strictures, I should at least have been silent: but if they are determined to abuse indiscriminately, right or wrong, without regard to justice, let them at least employ writers who have some share of ability, and who understand a little of the subject on which they pretend to decide."—Such is Dr. Thompson's opinion of those gentlemen who declare, that their *impartiality* has never been questioned!

In the Anti-Jacobin Review, vol. xviii. p. 417, the Edinburgh Reviewer is called *a slanderer and a calumniator*. He is represented as one who *ignominiously brands the British army, and traduces the whole military body*. His publication is there described as *the vehicle of false and malignant abuse against the troops of this country*.

The Anti-Jacobin Reviewer affirms, that the object of the Edinburgh Review is the depreciation of whatever tends to elevate or support this country. He alludes to one instance in particular, in which he represents a critic in that Review, as taking refuge in mis-statement, misquotation, and falsehood. He tells us, that in *seven* pages, the Edinburgh Reviewers tell *six deliberate falsehoods*; and asks whether these

are the critics to whom the public are to trust, for a faithful account of new productions.

He asserts, that such *disingenuous* and *fraudulent* artifices must proceed from a *design to misrepresent*. He asserts, that *every person, eminent for efforts beneficial to this country, may naturally expect the malignant hatred of the Edinburgh Reviewers*.

In the 19th volume of the *Anti-Jacobin*, we meet with the following remarks: “*Edinburgh Reviewers—exposure of their folly and impertinence.*” Mr. Godwin is unreasonably sceptical; it is, however, of no great importance; but the mention of it powerfully impels us to point out *the conscientious care* with which those judges of literature, the *Edinburgh Reviewers*, peruse the authors whom they pretend to criticise. They express their surprise, that Godwin, in his *Life of Chaucer*, has omitted the tradition of his being fined for beating a Franciscan friar in Fleet Street.

They then go on, in their usual merry mood, to tell us what advantages Mr. Godwin might have reaped from this tradition. “It would have suggested the *History of Fleet Street, and Fleet Ditch, and the Fleet Prison, and Fleta the Law Book, and the Fleet, or Royal Navy*. The fine might have introduced a history of the silver coinage, with an abridgment of the *Temple Records*. It is probable,” they sagaciously add, “that one or both parties were in liquor. If so, when, how, or with what liquor did they become intoxicated? Above all, the scuffle, and the drubbing itself, would have led to many a learned dissertation.

“ To illustrate the nature of the beating, Mr. Godwin might have described

‘ Your souse, your *wherit*, and your *dowst*,
Tugs on the hair, your *lob* o’ the lips, your *thump*,
 Your *kick*, the fury of a foot,
 Whose indignation commonly is stamped
 Upon the hinder quarters of a man,
 With all the blows and blow-men whatsoever,
 Set in their lively colours, givers and takers.’

“ All which knowledge is probably lost to the world, through the *ill-considered* interference of Mr. Phillips the publisher.”

To this curious specimen of the literary talents of the Edinburgh Reviewer, and this *beauty* of his Review, the Editor of the Anti-Jacobin subjoins the following remarks: “ We will not insult the good sense of our readers by asking them, whether they consider this nonsense as criticism? But we would seriously advise the Edinburgh Reviewers, before they venture for the future to give unlimited scope, either to their spleen or their merriment, at least *to read* the books which they profess to analyse. So far is Mr. Godwin from having omitted the tradition, as these directors of the public taste affirm, and concerning which they are so witty, that he has accurately given us the authority on which it is founded, and taken some pains to prove, that it is not entitled to much credit.”

The Editor of the Anti-Jacobin remarks, that in the analysis of Dr. Thompson’s Chemistry, the *power* of the critic to injure Dr. Thompson is greatly infc-

rior to his *inclination*. He remarks, that Dr. Thompson has ascertained who this critic is; and that his conduct is the more illiberal, as he is a rival who is endeavouring to lessen Dr. Thompson's class of pupils, in order to augment his own. It is generally understood, that this critic is the same who vents his spleen in the Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal, whose sentiments appear to be in perfect unison with those of the Editor of the Edinburgh Review, to whom he is said to be an understrapper.

“ Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina Mævi.”

The Editor of the Anti-Jacobin observes, that in the aforesaid analysis of Thompson's Chemistry, where defects have not been *found*, they have been *made in abundance*; and that the *art of misrepresentation* has been called in, *to supply the deficiency of solid grounds of censure*. Such is the character universally given to the Edinburgh Reviewers, *whose impartiality has never been called in question!*

In a subsequent part of the same volume of the Anti-Jacobin, the Editors of that work state, that the Edinburgh Review is *occasionally able*, and *uniformly abusive*; and that they have received from their correspondents a detection of *many of the base arts* of its writers and conductors. They propose to give an account of the Edinburgh Reviews, as they appear; but observe, that it is no pleasing task *to wade through masses of indiscriminate abuse and scurrility*; and hope, for the honour of the nation, that the second volume is already forgotten. They are of

opinion, that some of the articles of that volume are, on the whole, good, and some others tolerable, but *much the greater number detestable*. After stating some of the remarks of the Edinburgh Reviewers, on the Huttonian and Neptunian systems of geology, the Anti-Jacobin Reviewers observe, that a series of more unphilosophical hypotheses will not readily be found, within so small a compass, in any other work which has gained the smallest reputation, than those which are there strung together in the Edinburgh Review.

A writer in the Anti-Jacobin Review for December 1806, says, "The Edinburgh Review is distinguished by wit and ability; and it has also these characteristic marks: first, a heresy with regard to the establishment, political and ecclesiastical, particularly the latter, and a *propensity and partiality to every thing Scotch*. This, if not an amiable and venial defect, is nevertheless so *natural* a blemish in the work, that it proves it to be of *genuine manufacture*."

In the next place he tells us, "It has a *caustic severity of censure*, which is not always consistent with perfect liberality or good breeding." He thinks *wanton petulance* as displeasing as the churlish moroseness of ancient pedantry. He says, he should not have noticed these imperfections of the Edinburgh Reviewers, no doubt thinking them *natural*, had he not observed, in their last number, *a more than common flow*.

A very sensible writer in the Christian Observer for

October 1806, says, it is impossible to conclude his remarks, without noticing the *strange inconsistencies which appear in the Edinburgh Review*. He then declares, that while he contemplates the power which they possess of doing good, and the fearful responsibility attached to it, he feels a mixed emotion of envy and compassion, and is ready to cry out with a true poet,

“ Oh ! to your godlike destinies arise,
Awake, and meet the purpose of the skies !”

“ *But,*” he adds, “ *my hopes are not sanguine.*”

This writer knows the taste of a great proportion of the readers of the *Edinburgh Review*, and the sordid motives by which the authors of the work are actuated, too well, to entertain any sanguine hopes of a reform. A little sense, garnished with a little wit, is sufficient to feed the multitude, which principally consists of cursory readers and superficial judges.

“ All *fools* have still an itching to deride,
And fain would be upon the laughing side.”

While, therefore, the *Edinburgh Reviewers* are able to please *the mob of readers*, it is not likely they will trouble themselves about *the singular taste of the judicious few*.

HAVING been honoured with a small share of the obloquy of these gentlemen, in consequence of my writings in favour of vaccination, I published the fol-

following remarks in the Medical Journal for December 1806 :

“ Had I consulted my own interest, I should certainly have written in a more conciliatory strain ; or at least, if I had occasionally ridiculed either or both parties, in order to recommend myself to the public, I should have taken care not to open too wide a breach between those who were raised to some degree of eminence in the profession, however undeservedly, and myself. They resemble certain noxious vermin and venomous reptiles, which, if they are not powerful to do good, are powerful to do mischief. I have abundantly verified the old Terentian adage :

‘ Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit. ’

“ When I contemplated the conduct of those miscreants, who have so long been deluding the public, by asserting many things which they knew to be false, and many others which they did not know to be true, in order to prejudice them against vaccination, it would have been criminal to suppress my feelings ; and not give vent to those sentiments of indignation, which such nefarious proceedings were naturally calculated to inspire. No man, who took this decided part, could fail to incur some degree of odium among the enemies and the lukewarm friends of the practice ; or to incense that party, whose treason against human nature he had exposed. I have seen, in the hands of Dr. Thornton, a letter from one of the opponents of vaccination ; in which he warns those who write any thing against him, to be more cautious in

future, *if they regard their own personal safety.* This is the language of an assassin.

“ But there are assassins of a blacker dye ; the assassins of reputation. These, either from private pique, or jealousy, retire to the lurking-hole of a Review, and there endeavour to gratify their malignity. I am ready to admit, that some publications of this kind are conducted on fair and honourable principles ; but others are a disgrace to our age and country, and would be a disgrace to any age or country that gave birth or encouragement to such a farrago of slander and falsehood.

“ The author of one of them seems to fancy that he has a patent for abuse ; and if any other man encroaches on his prerogative, and passes a censure, however justly merited, he takes care to let him know, that he has a right to a monopoly of this article.

“ It is true, some of the works on vaccination were published in haste, and in a crude state. It is true they are a sort of chaos ; but their author, who was induced to accelerate their publication, from motives of humanity, was as sensible of this imperfection in those works as any mercenary scribbler can be ; and has not only apologized for it in his prefatory remarks, but also, as far as possible, supplied the want of arrangement by a copious index. It is, however, some consolation to reflect, that this chaos has furnished materials for every subsequent work on vaccination ; and that out of this chaos has arisen the beautiful order, in this new creation of medical science, which we now behold.

“ It is also true, that no critic, in the whole course of his censorial labours, could have ‘ had occasion to contemplate a scene so disgusting and humiliating, as is presented by the greater part of this controversy ; and that no political or personal animosity, even among the lowest and most prostituted scribblers,’ ever gave rise to so much coarse and intemperate language, gross scurrility, and low vulgar abuse, as has been exhibited by the opponents of vaccination, except in the purlieus of Grub Street, or the virulent and malignant page of an EDINBURGH REVIEW.

“ But whatever imperfections those works in favour of vaccination may labour under, it will be admitted as an ample apology by every candid critic, that they were written amidst an uncommon pressure of professional avocations, and a variety of disappointments from the different artists employed in the execution of the plates ; which rendered it necessary, either to print the practical and historical parts alternately, or to omit some of the most important information. Such as they are, they are submitted to the tribunal of the public, and will be handed down to a grateful posterity ; while the malignant critic, who vainly endeavours to blast their reputation, ‘ struts and frets his hour, and is forgotten.’

“ It is with an ill grace a man accuses others of ‘ personality and intemperance,’ whose personality and intemperance far exceed his critical acumen ; who tries to blast the reputation of others, in order to raise his own ; and is such a slave to national prejudice, that he can seldom discover merit in any one, who was

not born on the other side of the Tweed. He seems to fancy, that in this part of the kingdom learning is eclipsed, and genius extinct ; that we have all been groping in the dark ; and that we have nothing to direct us in the paths of literature, or the walks of science, but the faint and glimmering coruscations of the *northern lights*."

The just severity, or at least, as I conceive, the just severity with which I have spoken of the opponents of vaccination, gives offence to those meek and mild gentlemen, the Edinburgh Reviewers, who prefer those *candid* publications, in which the enemies of vaccination are represented as honest and good men, opposing the practice from a sense of duty, and inflicting wounds on it with reluctance. Some people, however, are of opinion, that such candour proceeds from *policy*, or from the same source as the candour of Bonaparte and of certain Reviewers, to every kind of religion, namely, *a perfect indifference to them all*.

Can we believe those men to be honest, whose writings abound with falsehood, or those men to be religious, whose writings abound with blasphemy ? Can we believe those men to be humane, whose conduct and writings furnish the most incontestable proofs, that, if vaccination disappointed our flattering hope, they should triumph on the occasion, and not lament its fall ?

But the Reviewers dislike *partisans*. It will be found, however, on minute investigation, that the pretence held forth by some gentlemen, of their not

being *partisans*, is a mere boast,—a mere *ad captandum*. It will be found, that one of them, who *was the partisan* of one leader, and *is the partisan* of another, surpasses those who are deemed more zealous, in his blind homage, and his unqualified adulation. It is indeed a happy thing *to know our own interest; and to have a spirit which can accommodate itself to the times!*

We are told, indeed, that there are *new lights* breaking in upon vaccination; and that *an oracle is about to correct the errors of the first inoculators*. It is however rather unlucky for the credit of gentlemen who pretend to such extraordinary feats, that their publications appear so late in the day. If they will turn to my Treatise, or to the Medical Journal and Medical Review, in which I stated my sentiments on the subject, they will find, that I was so fortunate as to correct those errors of the *first inoculators*, which they now propose to correct, *seven years ago*.

It is indeed rather surprising, that, not knowing such corrections to have taken place, any friend of humanity could suffer us to wander so long, before he warned us of our danger; and it is much to be wished, that, before he attempted to correct the errors of his neighbours, he had corrected his own. Book-making, as Dr. Waterhouse observes, here in Europe, consists of little more than pouring knowledge out of one phial into another. It is no uncommon thing to see an author strut in *borrowed feathers*, and shine with *borrowed light*.

When the former publications on this subject are

examined, it will be seen, that there is scarcely a new sentiment in some late works, however highly extolled by their *authors*, or *their partisans*; and you may as soon find out the longitude, as strike a new spark of light from them. Former publications, and the late Report of the Royal Jennerian Society, in which they had little or no hand, have furnished materials for the substratum and the superstructure of many a boasted fabric.

In the Medical Journal for February 1807, I published some very liberal testimonials in favour of Dr. Jenner, from the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and some distinguished individuals of that learned body; and observed that they reflected equal honour on Dr. Jenner and his discovery, and on the celebrated seat of medical science from which they flow. It would, however, be unreasonable to expect, that every thing which flows from the same source, should be equally respectable or equally pure.

“ One gentleman belonging to that seat of learning, who is the Editor of *a Journal*, talks of the acrimony of others, and takes care to give some pretty good specimens of his own. He talks of *partisans*, and acts the part of a *partisan*. He censures others for interlarding their writings with something like wit. This is an offence which he himself never has committed, and never will.

“ This gentleman is said to furnish materials for the medical articles of the Edinburgh Review; and have given an instance of *his temperate and impar-*

tial manner of investigating controverted subjects, in the review of Thompson's Chemistry, before alluded to. The materials, thus furnished, are indeed wrought into form by an abler hand. Whether he furnished the materials for the late article on vaccination, I know not; but whoever furnished them, I beg leave to correct some erroneous statements which it contains.

“ It is there asserted, that previously to Dr. Jenner's communicating his discoveries to the world, he had vaccinated some hundreds of children; and put them to the test of variolous inoculation. This is a mistake. When Dr. Jenner published an account of his discovery, he had not vaccinated many persons; nor would it have redounded to his credit, to have delayed his publication longer; since, by imparting it to the world, he enabled others to assist him in his inquiries, and to accelerate the propagation of this beneficial practice.

“ It is remarked by the Reviewer, that ‘ some *candid* and interesting discussion, as to the symptoms and effects of the disease, took place between Dr. Jenner, and Drs. Woodville and Pearson.’—It is, however, very well known to every one, who is in the least degree acquainted with the history of vaccination, that the discussion here alluded to was not always *candid*. The honey-moon of vaccination was soon over; and the few cold compliments which Dr. Jenner at first received from his rivals in the metropolis, were soon succeeded by the language of invective and reproach.

“ It is then asserted by the Reviewer, that, under the superintendence of Drs. Woodville and Pearson, the practice of vaccination was prosecuted to a great extent.—He forgets, however, to mention, that, under their superintendence, the small-pox was frequently propagated instead of the cow-pox ; and that the reports which they published, and the matter which they disseminated, were such as created a very general prejudice against the practice. He also forgets to mention, that such matter was in general sold at a very high price.

“ On this account, the author of these remarks embraced an early opportunity of procuring matter from the stock of Dr. Jenner ; which he has from that time diffused in every direction ; and sent it to many thousands of practitioners, in various parts of the world. In particular he furnished with it, some of the principal inoculators in the metropolis : who, till that period, were in the habit of using, and distributing, matter which produced pustular eruptions. Some account of these eruptions, and of the confusion occasioned by them, may be seen in my Treatise.

“ He also devoted a considerable portion of his time to the gratuitous vaccination of the poor, partly at his house, and partly at their own ; a plan which, for obvious reasons, is better calculated to succeed than any other ; but which a professional man cannot always pursue, on account of his other duties and avocations.

“ The Reviewer represents Messrs. Blair and Meriman, and the author of these remarks, as answering every body ; and accuses them of intemperance and personality. How far these accusations are just, the world will judge. To me it certainly appears, that this complaint commonly originates with those who smart under the lash of criticism, and is echoed by others, who have never taken the trouble to examine how far those criticisms are well founded.”

When the author of these remarks commenced his plan of disseminating genuine cow-pock matter free of expense, and abolishing the sale of *a lucrative commodity*, he committed *an unpardonable crime*. This has excited the resentment of a certain illiberal practitioner in the metropolis, whose calumnies have been faithfully re-echoed by his friend and colleague, the medical journalist, on the other side of the Tweed.

The following extract of a letter from Dr. Jenner to a foreign physician, then in London, taken from the Life of Jenner in the Public Characters, will afford sufficient proof that he did not think quite so highly of the public services of Dr. Woodville and Dr. Pearson as the Edinburgh Reviewers :

“ I am happy to find that you have been introduced to my friend Mr. Ring. The discovery which I had the happiness to announce to the world, is much indebted to his ardent zeal and indefatigable exertions for the rapid progress it has made ; while some of those, *who vainly conceived themselves instrumental in promoting its adoption*, have, in reality, from

their ignorance and indiscretion, rather retarded than accelerated its progress."

It would be an easy task to add many other testimonials of the utility of my publications on this subject ; but the following will, I trust, be deemed sufficient.

" SIR, *Broad Street Buildings, Nov. 23, 1801.*

" I return you my sincere thanks for the copy of your Treatise on the Cow-pox, which you were so obliging as to send me. I have perused it with great interest, and am happy to find a work which contains so full and comprehensive a view of the origin and progress of vaccination, as to become a valuable addition to the history of medicine.

" I am particularly glad that you have been at so much pains to sift out the truth from various mis-statements, which have hitherto afforded objections of some weight to the reasonable part of the community ; and I am not sorry that you have condescended to notice those gross and absurd arguments against the cow-pox, which only appeal to the prejudice of the world.

" Wishing much success to your further investigation of this discovery, which is unequivocally the most important in the medical world, I remain faithfully yours,

" CHARLES ROCHEMONT AIKIN."

Dr. Waterhouse, in his publication on this subject, intituled, " A Prospect of exterminating the Small-

pox," says, " Mr. Ring has collected from every publication, in every country, the most important facts respecting the vaccine discovery, its practice, and progress; to which is added, his own experience. He has happily contrived to engage the mind by pleasure, while he fills it with clear and instructive ideas."

Speaking of the disasters at Petworth, occasioned by the rashness and ignorance of certain practitioners, who disseminated variolous instead of vaccine matter, he says, " See the whole related in Ring's excellent Treatise on the Cow-pox."

In the same work, p. 18, he affords ample proof, that the elucidation of the subject, confused as it was by the writings of Dr. Woodville and Dr. Pearson, was no easy task. He says, Dr. Jenner observes, in one of his letters, that he " should certainly flatter himself too much, did he conceive that a perfect knowledge of vaccination could keep pace with the rapid progress which it was making in the world. The vaccine lancet is not to be trifled with." Again, in a letter dated March 4, 1801, he says, " Dr. ——— and Dr. ——— have, in many of their writings, confused the matter greatly. Is it to be wondered at, that gentlemen, who hastily take up a subject, with which they are but imperfectly acquainted, should, in presuming to elucidate, create confusion?"

Dr. Wall, in a letter dated Oxford, March 29, 1802, says, " Sir, I ought long ago to have thanked you for your obliging present of the First Part of your Treatise on the Cow-pox; but a great variety of en-

gagements prevented me. I have been extremely pleased with the perusal of your impartial history of this invaluable discovery, and your firm and manly defence of it against calumny and detraction. Accept, Sir, my thanks for the exertions which you have made in this great cause ; and though I have not the pleasure of your personal acquaintance, assure yourself that I feel every sentiment of regard for a gentleman, who has proved himself so eminently the promoter of medical science, directed to its best end, the preservation of the lives of millions."

The late Mr. Fermor, of Tusmore, one of the first patrons of vaccination, in a letter dated December 21, 1801, says, " I have lately received from you a Treatise on the Cow-pox, for which I beg leave to return you my best acknowledgments. I can with truth aver, that I know not which to value most, the accurate account you have given of the rise and progress of this disorder, or the science which you have displayed."

In another letter, dated October 23, 1803, he says, " Dear Sir, I have perused, with much satisfaction, the second volume of your work on vaccination. Were kings as anxious to preserve the lives of mankind, as you have shewn yourself to be, we should not see the world devastated, as it now is, by unnecessary wars and absurd destructive expeditions. How fortunate is it, in the midst of such horrors, to be convinced, that one of the greatest enemies of mankind, the small-pox, is setting, never to rise again !

" What infinite pains you have taken, to lop off

every head of the hydra as soon as it appeared ! There is scarcely an alley in the metropolis or its environs which you have not penetrated and explored, courting contagion.

“ Quæ regio in terris vestri non plena laboris ? ”

Dr. Brandreth of Liverpool, in a letter to Dr. Marshall, published in the eighth volume of the Medical Journal, represents vaccination as spreading rapidly in his neighbourhood, and overcoming every obstacle. He considers the efficacy of it as indisputably established ; “ but,” he adds, “ it is wholly unnecessary to repeat the advantages which must accrue from this discovery, since they have already been so ably illustrated by Mr. Ring, whose Treatise on this subject is a master-piece, written with zeal, candour, and great knowledge of the subject. The mass of evidence which he has produced in its favour would convert an infidel ; and I peculiarly admire the ingenuity and success with which he has detected the sources of unfavourable reports, and laid before his readers, in the compass of a moderate volume, all the knowledge, and an analytical view of all the publications on the subject. I can add nothing useful.”

The following is a resolution of the Medical Council of the Royal Jennerian Society for the Extirpation of the Small-pox, October 6, 1803 : “ The Council, considering, that after the promulgation of the discovery of vaccination many obstacles had occurred to the extension of the practice, to the re-

moval of which Mr. Ring contributed in a particular manner, by his assiduity and influence, his writings and his successful practice ; by which he promoted and extended vaccination through the metropolis, as well as most parts of Europe ; under this conviction, the Medical Council recommend to the Board of Directors to confer on him some signal mark of approbation, for his laudable and distinguished services."

" At a Board of Directors, December 1, 1803, resolved, That the pamphlets of the Society, and the works of Dr. Jenner and Mr. Ring, be sent to his Excellency Lieutenant-general Nugent, Lieutenant-governor and Commander in Chief of the island of Jamaica." The same publications were sent by the Board of Directors to the Governor-general of India, and to the Governors of Madras and Bombay.

" At a Quarterly General Court of the Royal Jennerian Society for the Extermination of the Small-pox, March 7th, 1804, his Grace the Duke of Bedford in the chair, John Ring, Esq. was proposed, and unanimously elected a Vice-President of the Council."

In the British Critic for November 1803, are the following remarks on the second volume of my Treatise : " In our Review for December 1801, we gave an account of the first volume of this laborious and useful publication, in which we have a complete history of the discovery, introduction, and progress of vaccine inoculation, not only in this country, but in all parts of the globe ; with analyses and critical observations on all the works which have appeared on the subject. In the present volume, the author ap-

pears not to have abated in zeal or industry, but pursues his course with the same ardour."

In the Medical Journal for February 1802, is the following testimony in favour of the same publication: "In his preface, Mr. Ring explains his reasons for publishing this elaborate work in parts; and then, with his well-known ability for the task, pursues the history of this very interesting subject, from the first mention of it in London down to the present time. There can be no doubt, that every practitioner, who thinks it his duty to acquire the most ample and correct information on the subject, will peruse Mr. Ring's elegant and comprehensive work. The zeal and perseverance with which he has traced and exposed the falsehoods and misrepresentations fabricated by ignorant, envious, and malignant practitioners, merit the applause of his contemporaries, and will secure that of posterity."

In a subsequent volume of the same Journal is the following opinion concerning the Second Part of my Treatise, which concludes the work: "This correct, indefatigable, and successful promoter of vaccination, has at length completed his elaborate history of the subject, down to the present time. His industry and talents for such a task are sufficiently known to those who are acquainted with him, or have read his first volume; to which this is in no respect inferior. This Second Part is accompanied with a coloured plate, which gives a very excellent representation of the progress of the vaccine vesicle through all

its stages ; and there is added a copious index to both Parts."

In the Critical Review for August 1804, are the following observations : " In this Second Part, Mr. Ring continues his history of vaccination to May 1803, and gives a very particular account of the practice in every part of the world. The extent of this new mode of preservation from the small-pox is truly astonishing, and its success has hitherto been unexampled, and, we believe, uninterrupted. These annals will, at a future period, be more interesting than at present ; since the facts are now within our memory and within our reach. At a future period, they will not be so easily attained."

Extract of a Letter from Dr. Mitchill, of New York, late Editor of the New York Repository, dated June 6th, 1802. " I have the pleasure of acknowledging the receipt of your elaborate and invaluable history of the vaccine distemper. Since the beginning of December, I have been so engaged in attending to my duties as a member of Congress, that it was almost out of my power to write to you, or any one else on the other side of the Atlantic. I was pleased to find, that you had entered into a complete history of vaccination. This discovery of Jenner is a most important event, and will ensure to him all the immortality that can be obtained here on earth.

" I am induced to believe, that your book was instrumental in preparing the minds of our citizens for this establishment ; for I soon made it known, and lent it to one of the leading gentlemen in that

institution. I have the satisfaction of hoping that this will find you well, and of assuring you of my respect and regard."

Extract of a Letter from Dr. Waterhouse, dated Cambridge, N. E. August 6, 1801. "Your polite letter, together with your Treatise on the Cow-pox, came to hand on the 27th of July, and with them some vaccine virus. I used part of it the same day, and sent one of the parcels to President Jefferson; under whose auspices vaccine inoculation has commenced at the city of Washington, and will undoubtedly extend itself through the southern States, where it will prove an incalculable blessing.

"Accept my particular thanks for your book, the perusal of which has afforded me great satisfaction. I see in it the substance of all that has been published on this new inoculation. It was so much the book I wanted, that I have already made an index to it, as far at least as the 400th page"

In his first tract on the subject of vaccination, intitled, "A Prospect of exterminating the Small-pox," Dr. Waterhouse had observed, that "Dr. Jenner and Mr. R. a surgeon of distinguished abilities, undertook to examine how it happened, that a distemper which is so mild in Gloucestershire should be converted into a severe disease in London." In the communication before alluded to, he informs me, that it was doubtful, from the drift of his letters, whether Mr. Rolph or Mr. Ring was the person here meant. Had Mr. Rolph taken an active part in this

investigation, I should not have had the vanity to suppose, that such a compliment was intended for me.

Dr. Coxe of Philadelphia, in a letter dated April 5, 1802, thanks me for what he is pleased to call my valuable Treatise, which, he says, has been a source of the greatest instruction and entertainment to him, and must have great influence in promoting the practice of vaccination.

In a second letter, dated June 4th, 1804, he acknowledges the receipt of the remainder of what he calls my most invaluable work.

In a third letter, dated October 26th, 1804, he thanks me for my Answer to Mr. Goldson; in which he declares his opinion that I have amply vindicated the honour of vaccination; and that he cannot well imagine on what principle Mr. Goldson would attempt to overturn the public confidence in the practice.

Dr. Labatt, secretary to the Cow-pock Institution in Dublin, in his "Address to the Practitioners of Ireland," instead of speaking of my Treatise in the contemptuous terms of the Edinburgh Reviewers, has honoured it with the title of a very elaborate work, and followed the example of many other distinguished writers, in quoting it as an authority on the most important occasions.

In the British Critic for March 1807, it is observed, that Dr. Willan says he is no inoculator or partisan; on which account he thinks himself less likely to be prejudiced, and more worthy of credit. To this sort of reasoning the writer in the British Critic

justly refuses his assent, and thinks it probable that Dr. Willan is full as prejudiced as those who made the experiments from which his conclusions are drawn.

He notices a number of opinions in Dr. Willan's book, which, he truly states, as I had previously stated in a former part of this work, are not peculiar to Dr. Willan, but to be found in most of the late publications on the subject. This shews the ignorance of the Edinburgh Reviewer, and the Edinburgh Journalist, and *others*, who have arrogantly and impudently insinuated the contrary, and tried to make the world believe that nothing was done till Dr. Willan took up his pen.

The writer in the British Critic says, Dr. Willan quotes a number of authors to shew, that the same opposition was at first made to the inoculation of the small-pox, as is now made to the inoculation of the cow-pock. *This, says the Reviewer, has been so often and so satisfactorily shewn by Mr. Ring and various other authors, that it seemed hardly necessary to assign so many pages to this purpose as Dr. Willan has done.* He also expresses his opinion, that the remarks on imperfect vaccination, in the following section of Dr. Willan's book, are equally uninteresting.

He also observes, that a considerable portion of the evidence there adduced by Dr. Willan has likewise been already printed in other channels; "*that his work contains but little which is new; and that the facts which it states are to be found in the Medical and Physical Journal, and many other distinct publications on the subject.*"

When the Northern Reviewer and Journalist paid such fulsome compliments to certain authors, whom they saw strutting in borrowed plumes, it was impossible not to recollect the words of the poet :

“ Unjust encomium doubly ridicules,
For nothing blackens like the ink of fools.”

In the Medical and Chirurgical Review for January 1802, is the following critique on the first volume of my Treatise : “ The intention of the author in compiling the present Treatise, as observed in the preface, was to collect and combine the substance of all that has hitherto been ascertained on this interesting subject ; and rather to incur the charge of prolixity, than to deserve the censure of omitting any thing of importance on an occasion where the welfare and happiness of the whole human race are concerned.

“ It is added, ‘ In some measure to supply the want of systematic order, a copious Index will be subjoined to the Second Part. Two plates will accompany that Part, which will unavoidably cause an addition to the price. The difficulty of procuring accurate representations of the vaccine vesicles has delayed the publication of this work ; and it is hoped, the reason, when understood, will plead a sufficient apology for the delay. It was the author’s wish to give one plate with each volume ; but he was unwilling longer to defer, what, he sincerely hopes, may prove useful.’

“ It will not be expected, that we should enter

minutely into the consideration of a work, which is itself so strictly analytical. *To such as are unacquainted with the practice of vaccination, it will afford a minute and accurate account of a very interesting subject; and even those who have already made it an object of their attention, will here be gratified with a critical, and, we believe, impartial review, of nearly all that has been written with regard to it.*"

In the same Review for January 1804, are the following observations on the second volume of my Treatise: "The amount of the evidence at present accumulated in favour of vaccine inoculation, considering the shortness of the period since its first introduction, is astonishing, and altogether unprecedented in science. The most sceptical ought now to be convinced, since it appears, that time has served only to do away and reconcile apparent difficulties and contradictions, without detecting any new facts, which at all impeach the advantages of the practice.

"Of the many labourers in this field, no one is better entitled to the palm of industry than the ingenious author of the Treatise announced above. *Whoever wishes for a summary of the experience and observations of the different writers on the subject, accompanied with a candid and judicious criticism on the testimonies which have been adduced, both for and against the practice, will here be amply gratified.* An excellent coloured engraving is prefixed, exhibiting the progressive daily changes of the vaccine pock, from the first to the eighteenth day of the disease. With such a guide, it is scarcely possible to mistake, or not to

distinguish it readily from the other eruptions which have been termed, though improperly, spurious vaccine pustules.”

The following observations are extracted from the second volume of the Annual Review : “ So much has now been written on this infinitely important subject, so many questions, more or less intimately connected with it, have been agitated, and, above all, so many thousands have partaken of the benefits of vaccine inoculation, that although the subject is by no means exhausted, *it has become a very useful undertaking, to exhibit, under one comprehensive point of view, a full, clear, and impartial representation, of all that has hitherto been done, to establish cow-pock inoculation.*

“ Mr. Ring’s name stands eminently conspicuous as one of the earliest, most indefatigable, and most zealous promoters of the new inoculation. We therefore give him full credit for the importance which he attaches to every iota that has ever been said or done on the subject. Let not our readers, however, suppose, that the present is a mere compilation. *The author enters into the subject so heartily, and is so much at home, in every question of controversy that has ever been started on these topics, that his pages abound with remarks, which agreeably, and generally usefully, break the tedious uniformity of narrative; nor are the satirical touch and the apt classical quotation wanting to enliven the reader.*”

The Reviewers then observe, that they turn with pleasure to the part where the author speaks of his

own efforts in this important cause. They also observe, that he speaks in the most satisfactory terms of the great success which is likely to crown the endeavours of those who have zeal enough to give, not merely their money, but also their time and *personal attention* to this object; and they declare, that, from all they can collect, he has a good right to speak in such terms. “Mr. Ring,” the Reviewers say, “scorns to compliment the good sense and liberality of the British public, at the expense of truth. He speaks his opinion plainly and forcibly, with regard to the reception which the new inoculation has met with in this island. A coloured plate is added to the second volume, which gives a most faithful and perfect resemblance of the vaccine vesicle in its several stages, and is executed in a manner very creditable to the artist.”

Many other decisive testimonials of the same kind might be adduced. The Editors of that celebrated work, the *Bibliothèque Britannique*, announce, that they “have received an answer to Mr. Goldson, written by Mr. Ring, a surgeon in London, author of a very complete Treatise on the Cow-pox, in two volumes.”

The other instance, in which my humble efforts are noticed with decided marks of approbation, occurs in a very valuable work on this subject, lately published by Mr. Pruen of Cheltenham, intitled, “A comparative Sketch of the Effects of variolous and vaccine Inoculation.” So far is this author from coinciding in opinion with the Edinburgh Reviewers,

that he declares *mankind have been essentially benefited by my accurate observations and unwearied exertions*; and, after alluding to the insidious calumnies propagated by certain jealous rivals of Dr. Jenner, who pretend that they promoted vaccination, when in reality they rather retarded its progress, he refers his readers to my writings, among others, for the vindication of his fame.

He honours me with the title of the successful and indefatigable champion of vaccination; thinks my statement of the advantages of the practice worthy to be inserted in his work; and ranks me with some of the brightest ornaments of the medical profession. He considers the censure of the Edinburgh Reviewers as *harsh*, and the work which they have rejected as a *classical performance*. He describes me as *not wearied by any exertions, nor deterred by any calumnies*; and refers the enemies of vaccination, who fancy that no arrows can penetrate *Dr. Moseley's shield*, to my Answer to him, where, he says, "*they will find a quiver full of them.*"

In the Critical Review for October 1804, is the following opinion of my Answer to Mr. Goldson: "Mr. Goldson has been a considerable benefactor to the cause of vaccination, by his cases; the attention of numerous respectable practitioners has been directed to this part of the subject: and vaccination is thereby placed on a much securer basis than before."

In a letter from Mr. Brewster of Brighton, dated August 27th, 1804, is the following paragraph: "Sir, I am directed by the Medical Council

of the Royal Sussex Jennerian Institution, to request that you will have the goodness to send two dozen copies of your very excellent 'Answer to Mr. Goldson,' that we may distribute them among the medical gentlemen at our next meeting."

The British Critic for July 1806, observes, that Dr. Moseley, without experience, and listening only to his prejudices, or to the vague reports of ignorant or interested persons, has ventured, in opposition to the concurrent testimony of nearly all the most respectable practitioners of medicine in the kingdom, to condemn vaccination, pretending that it fails to prevent the small-pox, or causes other diseases; and that Mr. Ring, having inquired into the cases which he had adduced, had detected numerous errors and misrepresentations. The Editors of the British Critic therefore, unlike the Edinburgh Reviewers, who can only discover that the author of these remarks has *exasperated* his opponents, refer their readers to the work in question, in which they declare, *he has brought forward a great deal of evidence in favour of the practice, and in refutation of Dr. Moseley; and that his publication is calculated to give as full satisfaction on the subject as the nature of it will permit.*

In the Medical Journal for February 1806, is also an analysis of my Answer to Dr. Moseley, to the following purport: "This universal champion of vaccination, who declines no challenge, has treated his present antagonist with far greater attention than any other opponent of the new practice. Dr. Moseley is honoured with a pamphlet of two hundred and

ninety pages, in which his wit is answered by wit, his arguments by arguments, and even his uncandid statements are treated with considerable respect. In fact, Mr. Ring seems to have availed himself of the rank which Dr. Moseley holds in the profession, and the important public situation which he fills, to give through him a full and general answer to all the alleged failures, consequent diseases, and eruptions, which have been so often, so industriously, and so unfairly dragged into public notice.

“ In our opinion, he has not failed in any part of his object ; but it has been observed in all ages, that truth, philanthropy, and science, cannot oppose falsehood, ignorance, and self-interest, on equal terms. The number of readers and their motives are most disproportionate. Those who read Dr. Moseley’s attack with *pleasure*, will not read Mr. Ring’s Answer with *candour*. This, however, is the lot of humanity ; and arises from causes, which will never cease to operate.

“ We have no doubt, that all the friends of vaccination will cordially thank their indefatigable friend and champion ; and if they read this Answer with the same pleasure which it has afforded us, they will confess, that superior gratifications, arising from controversy so conducted, are rare indeed. To us Mr. Ring’s Answer appears to be as complete a refutation of all the reasoning, as satisfactory a reply to all the alleged cases, and as brilliant a retort to all the wit, as such an attack can require.”

Perhaps, after all, the best antidote against Dr.

Moseley's attack on vaccination is, the republication of an extract of a letter from him to Dr. Mitchill of New York, inserted in the Medical Repository, which, the Editors of the Medical and Chirurgical Review justly remark, *will serve to amuse their readers*, as other effusions of the same author have already done. He there speaks of a new dissertation which he had lately published, *on the influence of the moon*; and indeed, in the opinion of every rational person, it is only *under the influence of the moon*, that such a farrago could ever be written.

He then boasts of his having been the first practitioner who denied the existence of contagion in fevers in the West Indies, and ridicules the establishment of an institution to prevent contagion in this metropolis, which he considers as a bugbear. Forgetting the

“ Ne mala vicini pecoris contagia lædat,

and a thousand other similar allusions in old authors, he is so hardy as to assert, that “ *contagion was unknown to the ancients* ;” and thinks it has its origin only in domestic ignorance and opaque policy. He tells us, he has visited almost all the lazarettoes in Europe, and therefore thinks he can prove that the plague is not contagious. Dr. Whyte and the philanthropic Howard were not quite so fortunate !

But the most curious and interesting part of his epistle, and that for which we are under the greatest obligation to him, is still to come. He tells us, that about four years previous to the date of it, he actu-

ally made an attempt to purchase three laden merchant-ships from the Levant, which arrived in England, and were condemned for having the plague on board; but, thank heaven, he could not succeed. They were all ordered out to sea, by our “*domestic ignorance and opaque policy*,” and scuttled and sunk. Had our rulers been governed by the *enlightened policy* of Dr. Moseley, they might have made a bargain that would have been advantageous to both parties. Three cargoes of infection would have yielded a glorious harvest to a medical man!—and this is the gentleman who is afraid of the cow-pox!

In the Critique on my Answer to Dr. Moseley, in the Annual Review for 1805, are the following remarks: “*Mr. Ring refers to a gentleman who was an early and violent opposer of the cow-pock; and who appears, unquestionably, to have been influenced by the most sinister motives, and to have used all kinds of arts to accomplish his ends. Our medical readers will probably recollect the circumstances, as well as the melancholy termination of his career. The author has delicately permitted his name to rest in oblivion, and we shall follow his example.*”

Hence it appears, that the Annual Reviewers are not quite so *candid* as to believe that all the opponents of vaccination are good citizens or honest men, or such as would behold the downfall of vaccination with regret. On no occasion is the motto of the Edinburgh Reviewers, *Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur*, or that other adage, *Bonis nocet qui parciť malis*, more applicable than on this.

The Annual Reviewers say, “ We shall here close our account of Mr. Ring’s *spirited* and *able performance*.” This and the other testimonials, of liberal and enlightened men, which I have already adduced, will, I doubt not, obliterate any false impression made on the public mind, by a set of despicable scribblers, who get their daily bread by calumny and detraction. Contemptible as they are, their falsehoods and misrepresentations, when seasoned with scurrility and low wit, if left unrefuted, might have some influence on the weak and credulous part of the community. It is therefore necessary to denounce these culprits, and to chastise them by way of example. This may teach them and others, that although they are suffered, for a while, to go on in their iniquitous career, and to sin with impunity, they may at length be called to a severe reckoning, and meet with their deserts.

“ Raro antecedentem scelestum
Deseruit pede pœna claudo.”

I CANNOT conclude this publication, without annexing some other documents, tending to corroborate the charge which I have brought against the Edinburgh Reviewers.

The first is taken from the British Critic for January 1805. The authors of that work express their surprise at the violence of these Reviewers towards

Dr. Young. They deem the conduct of the Reviewers on this occasion unreasonable, and their language such as would not be considered justifiable on this side of the Tweed.

They observe, “ Sir Isaac Newton was of opinion, that light is propelled from the sun as a projectile, in straight lines : on the contrary, Huygens and Hook, whose conjecture is supported by Dr. Young, supposed it to consist in a tremulous or undulating motion ; and there the matter rested. Cucumbers have continued to ripen, without waiting for the legal establishment of either hypothesis ; and no succeeding philosopher, either within or without the walls of Bedlam, ever imagined that it was necessary to establish, by the authority of the Royal Society, a catholic faith on this subject. But we must suppose, that as there are persons, who, ‘ *when the bag-pipe sings i’ the nose, cannot contain their urine,*’ so the bare mention of the word *optics* has the power of irritating to frenzy the nerves of the Edinburgh Reviewers. This idea is confirmed by the strictures on Mr. Wood’s *Optics*, and on those of Dr. Wollaston, in the same Journal.”

In the Medical and Chirurgical Review for September 1804, it is observed, that “ it was left to the Editors of the Edinburgh Review, to treat with scurrility and shameless invective the honest intentions of a writer, to convey with becoming diffidence, what he conceives to be important information, to the public ; to measure the efforts of others in the field of science by the diminutive standard of their own

knowledge; and to establish their own contracted notions, as the test of truth."

It is further observed, that "these Reviewers have executed the task which they have undertaken, occasionally with ingenuity; but in a manner which defies all liberality of sentiment and generous feeling, evincing at once a malignant disposition in the writers, and an anxious wish, as it would seem, to crush every attempt to extend the boundaries of science. It is therefore not to be wondered at, that authors are now and then found possessed of spirit enough to resist such brutal tyranny, on the part of ignorant and self-elected censors; and to appeal to the candour of the public against misrepresentation and injustice."

Such is the character given of the Edinburgh Reviewers, whose impartiality has never been called in question! So far, however, are their critical brethren, the Medical and Chirurgical Reviewers, from subscribing to this empty boast, that they tell us, they "are confident whoever reads the critique of the Edinburgh Reviewer on Dr. Jackson's publication, and is well acquainted with that work, will assent to the concluding paragraph, and agree with Dr. Jackson, that the censures of the Reviewer are neither justified by arguments or facts. He will agree with Dr. Jackson, that the performance of the Reviewer stands in that degree of inferiority, it point of science, that it would not have deserved any notice from him, had it not appeared in a work to which the public have attached some merit. He will agree with Dr. Jackson, that while the Reviewer is contemptible in science, he is

eminent in rudeness ; and marked by a propensity to misquote and pervert a plain meaning, for the sake of imposing a false opinion on the public. He will agree with Dr. Jackson, that this Reviewer is a reviler in malice, and that while he wishes Dr. Jackson's book had never been written, his employer will have reason to wish it had never been reviewed."

The Medical and Chirurgical Reviewers think, that any one who takes the trouble of perusing Dr. Jackson's statement, will readily allow, he has justified his conduct and his opinion in the most complete manner ; and *that he has very properly treated the censures of the Edinburgh Reviewer with contempt.* They conclude with saying, that by giving an author an opportunity of vindicating himself from *malignant and ill-founded charges*, they have gratified their own feelings, and, they trust, those of their readers ; *that it is only to be wished, the reply had as wide a circulation as the calumny ;* and that they most willingly contribute their slender aid to its diffusion.

Some "Remarks on a Piece of Criticism in the last Number of the Edinburgh Review" have lately been published by Mr. William Hunter, author of a work entitled, "Reasons for not making Peace with Bonaparte." Mr. Hunter adds one to the number of complainants against the Edinburgh Reviewers. He is dissatisfied, not on account of any critical acumen which their production displays, but "because it contains *two gross misrepresentations, purposely made ;*" and he has written these remarks, in order that the public may have an opportunity of properly appre-

ciating the candour of these northern Reviewers. He convicts the writer of that article of *the grossest ignorance and inaccuracy*; serious defects in any man, but particularly in one who pretends to be *a critic*. From these and other flagrant proofs, I cannot help thinking, in spite of popular prejudice, that the Edinburgh Reviewers are destitute of every qualification that constitutes a critic, and that they are vulnerable in the head as well as the heel.

In the 16th volume of the Monthly Magazine, a writer, who only signs the initials of his name, alludes to a charge brought against Mr. Shepherd, author of the Life of Poggio, in a work which *calls itself a Review*. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that this is the Edinburgh Review. In a subsequent part of the same Magazine, Mr. Shepherd condescends to notice the ignorance and impertinence of the stripling, who analyzed his work, and who, it seems, had not finished the first course of his medical studies. He censures Mr. Shepherd for not giving an account of the Italian compositions of Poggio, although no such compositions exist. This unmerited censure Mr. Shepherd attributes to *ignorance*, but *ignorance of the grossest kind*.

This tyro in criticism, as well as medical science, commits so many blunders, that Mr. Shepherd cautions him not to write again on a subject which he does not understand. He informs him, that from critics we expect a maturity of judgment; and reminds him, that *an ass* may be detected, though lurking under *a lion's skin*.

In the third volume of *Flim Flams*, it is observed, that the publisher of the *Edinburgh Review*, and his crew of young vagrants, menace the annihilation of all the genius and learning on this side of the Tweed. It is also observed, that this Review is not conducted on principles of morality; that these beggarly critics *want a clean shirt and a guinea*; and *that they find patronage*, where any honest man would blush to find it, — *in the malice of the age*.

So far is this author from thinking the *Edinburgh Reviewers* impartial, as they pretend to be, that he tells us when they are writing a comment on the work of a countryman, they can retract and disavow their arguments; that they never treat a Scottish friend as they treat an Englishman; but cover their dirk with ivy, lest it should inflict too deep a wound. Such are the Reviewers, whose impartiality has never been called in question!

In the same publication we are informed, that the *Edinburgh Reviewer* represents all modern English sermons as nothing but tedious essays, whose characteristic is decent debility, and likely to remain such. We are also informed, that the critic who gives this opinion is a rival of the publishers of sermons, having published some himself; and although a man of genius, that he is *a very unfair critic*.

In the same work, the Scotch bookseller is represented as a sworn foe to every London author. It is moreover remarked, that these Reviewers, who are instigated by a principle of perpetual censure, are very apt to commit blunders; that they have, on

many occasions, betrayed the grossest ignorance of the subjects on which they presume to write; that boys, just entering on their medical studies, sit in judgment on the works of many a grey-headed Hippocrates; and that a considerable number of respectable authors are now indignant at their treatment. This writer, however, thinks them determined to persevere in their iniquity; he represents one of them as declaring, that *no author shall come clean out of his hands*; and, that *if an angel were to pass in review before him, he would smut his wing*. Such are the gentlemen whose impartiality has never been called in question!

THE END.

BOOKS by the AUTHOR.

1. REFLECTIONS on the SURGEONS' BILL. Price 5s.
2. A TREATISE on the COW-POX; containing the HISTORY of VACCINE INOCULATION, and an Account of the various Publications which have appeared on that Subject in Great Britain and other Parts of the World; in two vols. 8vo. with Plates, representing the whole Progress of the Vaccine Vesicle. Price 1l. 1s. boards.
3. A COMPENDIUM of VACCINATION. Price 1s. 6d.
4. An ANSWER to MR. GOLDSON. Price 1s. 6d.
5. An ANSWER to DR. MOSELEY. Price 6s.
6. An ANSWER to MR. BIRCH. Price 2s. 6d.